composed emulate an onyx, the ground of a rich transparent dark amethystine colour; and the snowy figures which adorn it are in bas-relief, of workmanship above all encomium, and such as cannot but excite in us the highest idea of the arts of the ancients.

"Its dimensions are 9¼ inches high, and 21¼ inches in circumference. A more particular account of this famous vase may be found in Montfaucon's Antiquities, vol. v. book ii. chap. 6; in Signor Bartoli delle Sepulchri Antichi; in the Ædes Barberinæ; in Wright's, Breval's, and Misson's Travels; in Winckleman on the Arts of the Ancients, &c. &c.; and an accurate engraving, with a particular description of it, was given in "Gentleman's Magazine," vol. lvi. p. 97. 1,029*l.*"

N.B. This sum is the price it fetched at the sale of the Duchess of Portland's collection, by Mr. Alderman Skinner, who was thirty-seven days employed in the sale at the duchess's house, in Privy-gardens, commencing his labours on the 24th April, 1786. I presume it was bought in by the family.

SLAB SLATING—CONDENSATION OF MOISTURE.

SIR,—It is generally known that the great objection to the use of slab slate as a covering to a building is the fact of its being liable to dampness on the underside in certain states of the weather. The evil no doubt arises from damp air, which, as it comes in contact with the slate, condenses and falls in drops of water; this especially occurs after a frost. If any of your readers are acquainted with an application as a simple remedy to prevent this defect, and would make it known through the medium of your journal, it would be a means of greatly extending the usefulness of that valuable material.

I am, yours, &c., &c.,

Southampton. AN ARCHITECT.

[Our correspondent will find some remarks on this subject in the notice of proceedings at the Institute of Architects, in our present number. The evil would be lessened by covering the slate outside with any non-conductor of heat. —ED.]

Miscellanea.

NOVEL APPLICATIONS OF IRON.—Experiments have for some years been in progress, chiefly under the superintendence of Herr Daae, inspector of mines in Richmond, in the Duchy of Brunswick, with a view to make cast-iron, as the cheaper and more durable material, applicable to the preparation of stereotype plates. The success of these experiments is attested by the publication of a cast-iron stereotype edition of the Bible, published at Nordhausen, the price of which, with marginal readings, is 9 ggr. (13d.) Another application of the same metal has lately arrested our attention, and for which it possesses certain capabilities. We refer to the use which is beginning to be made of it in perpetuating the memory of the dead. Sepulchral monuments, formed of cast-iron, are already to be found in our metropolitan church-yards and suburban cemeteries. We believe that to the late Mr. Thomas Wedlake, of the Fairkytes Foundry, near Romford, must be awarded whatever credit is due for the novelty of the application.

THE NEW CHAPEL, COLCHESTER, was erected in 1844, from the design of Mr W. F. Poulton, architect, Reading. It is built of white Copford brick, the strings, entablature, &c., being formed of moulded brick. Stone is used only for the caps and bases of pilasters and for the impost mouldings. The colour of the facing brick being uniform, the building has the appearance of a stone erection. The size in the clear is 40 feet 6 inches by 51 feet 6 inches — accommodation for 500 persons. There is a shallow gallery across the entrance end. The pulpit is suspended from the back wall, with entrance by steps direct from the minister's private vestry. The size of vestry is 30 feet by 11 feet 6 inches. The contract (by Mr. Kemp, builder, Colchester), for the chapel and vestries, was 1,011*l.* Amount of extras, 18*l.* 15*s.*

MAHOGANY AND ROSEWOOD VENEERS.—A question of some importance to the importers of foreign furniture woods has recently been raised by the customs officers at Hull. A parcel of veneers of mahogany and rosewood, cut from the log, were imported into that port from Hamburgh, which the revenue officers placed under detention, as being contrary to the navigation laws, *i.e.*, as being the produce of Asia, Africa, or America, and imported into this country from Europe, the logs, in this instance, having been imported into Germany from the place of growth, and there cut or sawn into the very fine thin slices of wood used in the making of cabinet furniture, and known by the trade as veneers. The officers, however, considered that this operation, performed in Hamburgh, did not constitute a manufacture, inasmuch as the wood retained its original state, having been simply sawn or cut from the log, and would require polishing &c., here, previously to being fit for use for the purpose to which it is applied. It has, however, been decided that, under the Treasury order of the 23rd February, 1833, the parties are entitled to the admission of the veneers as the manufacture of the country from which they were imported, although the wood itself, in its raw state, be the produce of either of the other quarters of the globe. This decision has been communicated to the officers for their information and future government.

FIRST JUDGMENTS ON NEW DISCOVERIES.—However void of practical utility any discovery may at first appear, it is impossible to tell to what important results it may eventually lead. Who could have foreseen an acquaintance with the minutest wonders of the heavens from the child of a spectacle-maker amusing itself with convex glasses—the marvellous results of steam machinery from the steam issuing from a kettle—or the illumination of our towns from burning a piece of coal in the bowl of a tobacco pipe? One ingenious contriver of a steam-ship was advised by a former president of the Royal Society to employ his time on some practicable scheme, and not on a visionary speculation; and thus it is that the suspicion and distrust with which any novelty is commonly received has tended to damp inquiry and retard science. I have been assured by that eminent geologist, the Rev. W. D. Conybeare, that his early investigation of the more recent strata of this kingdom, and especially of the Portland oolite, &c., was treated as an idle occupation of time, and as leading to no useful purpose; whereas the progress of geology, since that time, has shown that the stability of our great public edifices depends on a proper selection from the rocks best adapted for building; and Mr. William Smith, who shared in the obloquy of following such useless pursuits in the infancy of the science, was in his old age employed by government, in conjunction with Mr. De la Beche and others, to examine the various strata of the United Kingdom, with a view to selecting the best stone for building the new Houses of Parliament.—*T. Sopwith on Glaciers in Great Britain.*

SCHOOLS OF DESIGN.—Mr. Edward Bannister, of Hull, in urging the establishment of a school of design in that locality, where, at present, there is no place for the study of the fine arts, remarks very justly:—"For the pursuit of that knowledge which is essential to the cultivation of design as applicable to our arts and manufactures, every facility should be afforded and every means held out to induce the artizan to become skilful and ready in the execution or invention of patterns which he may be called upon to produce. The acknowledged superiority possessed by the French in design is so generally admitted, that any observation in proof thereof would be needless. The demand by the public for all articles wherein elegance of design is exhibited fully proves that the people are already capable of appreciating their merits, and that in order to compete with other nations we must bring into operation an equal amount of talent in the production of goods both of a useful and ornamental nature. Design is the same arrangement and fitness of parts, to form an harmonious whole, whether employed in the grouping of materials for a shawl pattern, or in the disposing of figures for a cartoon; it may exist in the commonest and most ordinary article, rendering it chaste and beautiful, whilst without it the most costly and elaborate works are vulgar and contemptible. Designs must also be adopted suitable to the purposes for which the articles may be applied—a triangular coin or a square tea-cup would be as absurd as a fat Hamlet or a lean Falstaff; how often do we see used the most ridiculous and unmeaning patterns; nature in all her freaks never produced anything so incongruous, the willow pattern to wit, and the grafting of various flowers and fruits upon one stem, exhibiting monstrosities in form and colour which the painted Indian could never rival, nor the gay Chinese surpass."

PUBLIC FOOTPATHS.—A few evenings since, Mr. Aglionby called the attention of the House of Commons to the unprotected state of the public footpaths, which are now frequently crossed and intersected by railway constructions, quite regardless of the rights and convenience of the neighbourhood. The consequence of this state of things was that footpaths to the church, the village, and through the fields, might be intersected by railway-cuttings, 20 or 30 feet deep, so that there would be a descent, and then an ascent of that magnitude, to be accomplished before the footpath could be regained. What he desired to have was, that public footpaths should be protected the same as railways. Lord G. Somerset expressed his willingness to give the subject his best consideration.

GALVANISED IRON.—An action brought by Patteson and others, against Holland and others, for the infringement of a patent granted in 1837, for an "improvement in coating or covering iron or copper for the prevention of oxydation," was heard last week in the Court of Common Pleas. The defendants pleaded—first, that they were not guilty; secondly, that the plaintiffs, or those they represented, were not the first and true inventors, and, further, that the specification did not particularize and determine the nature of the invention, and in what manner the same was to be performed. The evidence, on the part of the plaintiffs, related to very few points, the main question being, that if the patent were valid, whether the defendants had infringed it. No witnesses were called on the part of the defendants, who relied upon the cross-examination of the witnesses put forward on the part of the plaintiffs; but several scientific persons were examined on behalf of the plaintiffs, and upon whose cross-examination the defence was rested. The specification stated, that the zinc by which the iron or copper was to be coated might be used either in a state of fusion, or in a solid state reduced into powder. The iron was to be previously scoured by immersing the metal in water acidulated with sulphuric acid, or by dipping it into a solution of sal ammoniac, or in water acidulated with muriatic acid. The metal pieces, after being dipped, were to be dried immediately, and, as the specification stated, might be dried by holding them over a reverberatory furnace. The zinc was to be melted in a crucible of earthenware, or of cast-iron with bricks, or an earthen lining of some lined kind. The specification then stated, that the zinc, being melted, must be skimmed carefully, and the surface covered with sal ammoniac, after which the plates of iron or copper were to be slowly introduced into the melted zinc. With regard to small pieces of metal, such as nails, small chains, &c., they were to be thrown into the melted zinc, covered with sal almoniac, and afterwards put into a reverberatory surface, and covered with charcoal. A red heat was to be maintained there during a quarter of an hour, while the mass was moved and shaken, until the pieces of metal had discharged the excess of zinc which they had taken up. It was admitted, by the witnesses for the plaintiffs, that the coating of iron with zinc, as a means of preventing its oxidation, had been known in England, at least half a century. There was no evidence to shew that a reverberatory furnace had ever been used; and one of the witnesses admitted, that, although it might be possible to use an earthenware crucible, it would, practically speaking, be impracticable.—The jury, after an absence of half an hour, returned into court, finding for the plaintiffs on all the issues but the fifth, which they found for the defendants; thereby, substantially, giving a verdict for them, and thus, in a great measure, stultifying the verdict given in favour of the plaintiffs on the other points.

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